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SAFETY GUIDANCE MATERIAL

SAFETY MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

This safety resource was written for the scrap industry by the scrap industry and was developed to assist you in making your scrap operation a safe place for employees, customers, and visitors. The best safety programs are custom-tailored to individual operations. These resources offer sample wording of policies and procedures.

GETTING EMPLOYEES INVOLVED AND STARTING A SAFETY COMMITTEE

APPLICABLE STANDARD: N/A

EMPLOYEES AFFECTED: All employees

WHAT IS IT?

Employee involvement is the creation of an environment in which people have an impact on decisions and actions that affect their jobs. It is a management style and culture that actively encourages employee participation for improving all facets of an operation (quality, production, safety, environmental). A great way to develop this culture is to create a safety committee. The safety committee should be composed of line workers and at least one management representative, and governed by the articles in the committee's vision or mission statement.

The strongest safety committees are those that design and implement safety and health programs, solve problems, and act as a consultant to senior management by identifying problems and recommending solutions.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

According to Oregon OSHA, the most effective safety committees function as a "profit center activity" by finding solutions to problems that cause workplace accidents, illnesses, and injuries. Fewer accidents, illnesses, and injuries mean lower workers' compensation claims costs and insurance premium rates. Reduced accidents also result in increased productivity.

WHAT IS REQUIRED?

- Management support.
- A group of volunteers willing to demonstrate commitment to attend committee meetings and follow through on assigned tasks.

HOW DO YOU DO IT?

Form the committee

Senior management should declare their intentions or expectations for a safety committee.

Some questions to consider:

- What is the size and makeup of the committee?
- What is the overall purpose of the committee?
- What is the term of a committee member?
- How often should the committee meet?

The size of your company will usually determine the size of the committee. Ideally, you would like to get volunteers from each department or work group, but never let it exceed 15%–20% of your total work force. Any more strains the effectiveness of the committee. Limit the number of consecutive terms an employee can serve. This gives others a chance to serve and keeps things fresh.

Creating the committee can be done by seeking volunteers or asking specific employees to serve.



Hold an initial meeting

After your committee is formed, set a date for your first meeting. This might address some or all of the following items:

- Develop a mission or vision statement to outline the purpose of the committee. Before writing a statement, however, you might want to consider conducting a safety survey of all employees to identify strengths and deficiencies.
- Develop a standard agenda for regularly scheduled meetings. This agenda might include blocks of time for the following tasks: :
 - o reviewing reports of accidents or near-misses and making any recommendations to reduce or prevent recurrences
 - o identifying workplace hazards and making recommendations for eliminating hazards
 - o reviewing safety/housekeeping inspection audits, with follow-up progress reports
 - o subcommittee or project reports
 - o new and old business
- Set a schedule of dates to hold meetings and decide on the maximum length of a meeting. Meeting on a monthly basis and limiting the meeting to one hour is fairly common.

Conduct regular meetings

Keep meetings focused and purposeful. Developing and using a standard agenda, such as the one outlined above, keeps meetings focused and prevents them from becoming gripe sessions.

Although the management representative should act as a facilitator and resource, the first meetings will probably require that he or she also act as the team leader. As the committee settles in, there will probably be at least one person who emerges as someone who can assume the role of committee chair.